

UNCLASSIFIED

Implementation of the ARNG Deployment Cycle Support (DCS) Yellow Ribbon Program (YRP)

REFERENCE NGB-SFSS Memorandum Dtd 30 May 2008. This program is mandated by the Fiscal Year 2008 National defense Authorization Act (NDAA FY 2008).

Background. The ARNG, to better prepare our Soldiers and Families, has developed the ARNG DCS Yellow Ribbon Program. A robust, preventive, proactive support program for the Soldiers and their Families. This provides the proactive continuum of care needed to ensure our Soldiers and Families receive the care and services they need to support a normal life through the entire deployment cycle. As the war on terror continues, demands on the Army and Air National Guard service members and their Families have increased, which has brought a significant impact on recruiting and retention efforts. We must focus our attention on the health and wellbeing of the Soldier and their Family as a total package in order to fully address the complex and ongoing needs resulting from fulfilling military commitments.

The Yellow Ribbon Program (YRP). Is a result of undeniable negative reactions and behaviors that our service members and our families have experienced as a result of deployment. These problems manifest themselves in areas such as spouse and child abuse, AWOL rates, overwhelming divorce rates, drug and alcohol dependency, unemployment, decreased retention rates, and severely increased presence of veterans in the criminal court system. While 17-20% of our returning veterans are diagnosed with PTSD, we have far more that are affected by drug and alcohol dependency with the majority of cases to end in death. The military, the VA, and the nation as a whole have seen the social cost of ignoring these problems and have responded in the FY 2008 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA FY 2008) which mandates the Army National Guard Deployment Cycle Support Yellow Ribbon Program. This also includes language that requires all Army National Guard Soldiers to participate in a PDHRA.

The SDNG YRP includes before, during and after mobilization phases which includes a predeployment phase and IDT period, during deployment phase and a post-mobilization phase which includes three IDT activities and ongoing veterans' services for the life of the SM and their Families.

The Pre-Deployment Family Readiness IDT period will be conducted prior to the actual deployment of the unit. The period focuses on preparing military families for mobilization by education on resources, support and coping tools provided by our Family Readiness Office. Information and procedures critical for the SM's Family include Red Cross, Family Assistance Center resources, Tricare and Family Entitlements, LES Presentation, Family Military Life Consultant, and Youth Coordinator presentations.

During deployment Family members are contacted on a regular basis to provide guidance or assistance as needed by our Family Assistance Center staff.

The first post- mobilization IDT period is the 30 day Reunion and Reintegration event. This is conducted for both the SM and their spouse, significant other or a parent. The IDT event will be conducted at a location off-site from the armory and generally out of town. This ensures uninterrupted participation of the event.

The second post-mobilization IDT period is the 60 day Compulsive Behavior Prevention event. This event is conducted for primarily the SM. The IDT event will be conducted at an offsite location, but can be conducted in the unit's hometown. The focus is to provide information and self awareness of dangerous behaviors SM may be having and not realizing the harm they may causing to themselves or their families. Confidential counseling by Healthcare professionals will be provided.

The third post-mobilization IDT period is the 90 day Post Deployment Health Risk Assessment (PDHRA). This IDT event will be conducted at the units HS. Its focus is to ensure all medical PDHRAs have been completed and all deployment medical issues have been fully addressed by the appropriate personnel.

The Yellow Ribbon events are turn-key in nature meaning that the command and leadership must be given the chance to participate as an individual and not worry about having to research, plan, and execute an effective effort to address the stresses and problems associated with deployment. The Staff of the Family Program Division is fully prepared to assist the units in the planning, and execution of these events. The level of commitment by soldiers to participate and accept the many new services now available to address these problems is directly impacted by the commitment made by the leadership who often are just as vulnerable if not more vulnerable to the same symptoms. The senior leadership now recognizes that soldiers' needing help is the same rational as performing PMCS on equipment. We don't throw away our valuable resources with problems; we fix them and certainly owe this much and more to those soldiers who perform their duties so admirably.